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REPORT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL
UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF
INTERNATIONAL LAW

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Identical letters dated 10 September 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a letter dated 10 September 1996 addressed to you by Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the hostile statements made with regard to Iraq by the President of the United States of America, which constitute blatant interference in the internal affairs of our country.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex, the letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 11 and 147 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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ANNEX

Letter dated 10 September 1996 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I should like to inform you that the United States of America is continuing to pursue its policy of aggression towards Iraq not only by military means but also by statements by United States leaders which contain remarks that clearly constitute blatant interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Iraq and contravene all rules and usages which, in the eye of the law and international legitimacy, govern relations between States.

The most recent such statement was made by the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, on 9 September 1996; it was issued by the government press service and subsequently picked up by news agencies around the world. In this statement, the American President said that the United States was doing "everything we can to get out of Iraq ... those who have worked with us" in Iraq, adding that "we are doing everything we can to help those individuals who need to get out of Iraq".

The United States President, whose remarks clearly constitute interference in Iraq's internal affairs, went on to say: "Our ability to keep an eye on events taking place in Iraq is limited. However, we have accomplished something I think is important ... when we saw that what he had done violated United Nations resolutions, that he was oppressing his people and had launched a military attack on Irbil. What we have done is to expand and reinforce the no-flight zone by striking at their anti-aircraft defence positions. This means that every day he has to pay for his room to manoeuvre within his country and for threatening his neighbours ... we have done what we felt was needed there."

With these remarks, the United States President seeks to fool the entire world by using specious arguments to justify his country's military attacks on Iraq, in defiance of all customs, agreements and all the values enshrined in international and humanitarian law. The world has unanimously condemned these operations, which have not received any support, even within the Security Council, even though the United States has exerted constant pressure on that body. The President of the United States is overtly sanctioning the acts of aggression perpetrated by his country, which is spending hundreds of millions of dollars to destabilize Iraq and threaten its security, sovereignty and stability.

The attitude and statements of the United States set a grave precedent in the history of international relations and run counter to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, Article 2, paragraph 4, of which reads: "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations." These hostile military acts by the United States constitute a flagrant violation of one of the established principles of international law, namely, the right of peoples to choose their own political and social system.

While urging the United Nations to take the necessary steps to halt the irresponsible actions of the United States Administration, which can only reduce the Organization's role to insignificance and destroy the peaceful basis on which international relations are built, the Government of the Republic of Iraq holds the United States Government fully accountable before international law for any consequences its aggressive and unlawful positions vis-à-vis Iraq may have. Furthermore, Iraq reserves the right to take any steps it deems necessary to defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and the security of its people in the face of the United States Government's aggressive policy.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 11 and 147 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq